

from Sattelberg, which agrees well with *Hyla impura* as described by Mehely (Termeszetr. Füzetek. 1893).

The herpetology indicates, as other branches of zoology, the mixed origin of the fauna of Papuasia. There are ancient forms, such as Geckonidæ, Typhlopidae, and Boidæ, the members of which have had time to become widely distributed, cosmopolitan so far as the climatical conditions allow it. Others originating from Asia reach their extreme limit, in a south-easterly direction, in Papuasia (and Australia), as, for instance, *Dendrophis*, *Dipsadomorphus*, *Tropidonotus*\*, and Ranidæ. Another group has reached New Guinea from Australia, and there become checked from further distribution: Hylidæ is typical in this respect. This family, being chiefly † Australian and South-American, has extended from the latter to North America, and from there to Eurasia, as its distribution clearly shows. This family is thus a typical representative of Australia in the fauna of Papuasia. But the great number of endemic genera and species in the herpetological fauna of Papuasia indicates its long isolation.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE.

*The Story of Bird-life.* By W. P. PYCRAFT.  
London: George Newnes, Ltd., 1900. Pp. 244.

THIS recent addition to the "Library of Useful Stories" is by a rising ornithologist whose name is well known to specialists by the admirable work which he is doing in the physiology and comparative anatomy of birds. We believe that this is about his first appearance before the general public, and we hope it will not be the last, for he has succeeded in compressing a large amount of useful elementary information respecting birds, much of which is not easily accessible in a convenient form elsewhere, into a very moderate compass. The structure of birds, especially of the wings and feathers, their courtship, nests, migration, geographical distribution, pedigrees, &c. are discussed in an easy and attractive style in twelve chapters. There is also a series of text-illustrations, among others a restoration of *Archæopteryx*, and two full-page illustrations, "The summer home of the Ruff and Reeve" and "The love-display, or 'showing off,' of the Great Bustard, *Otis tarda*." Those interested in the latter subject will find a beautiful group of Great Bustards in the Ornithological Gallery of the Natural History Museum at South Kensington. We congratulate Mr. Pycraft on the production of this interesting little book, for it is not every specialist who is able to write successfully and popularly on his subject, as well as scientifically.

W. F. K.

\* The two former perhaps on driftwood or by the agency of man, the last by swimming.

† Like *Cystignathidæ*.